

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6956

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 0283

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, ASEAN, MARR, SN

SUBJ: FURTHER SINGAPORE-INDONESIAN DISCUSSIONS ON ASEAN AND
OTHER BILATERAL MATTERS

REF: SINGAPORE 5613

SUMMARY: IN RECAPITULATING SUHARTO-LEE DISCUSSION IN LATE NOVEMBER, MINISTER SUSENO (INDONESIAN EMBASSY) REVEALED THAT P.M. LEE HAD SUGGESTED THAT IN HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO THE U.S. NEXT SPRING HE ACT AS SPOKESMAN FOR THE INTERESTS OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES. HE ALSO PROPOSED AN ASEAN SUMMIT MEETING IN FEBRUARY. ON BOTH POINTS SUHARTO RESPONDED CAUTIOUSLY AND IN A NON-COMMITTAL MANNER. HOWEVER, SUHARTO DID AGREE TO AN ASEAN-WIDE TRADE PREFERENCE AGREEMENT TO BE LIMITED TO THE PRODUCTS OF THE FIVE ASEAN INDUSTRIES. SUSENO CONFIRMED THAT GOS HAD PROVIDED THE GOI FIGURES ON ITS TRADE WITH INDONESIA AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO ON AN ANNUAL BASIS. THE GOI ALSO AGREED IN PRINCIPLE THAT SINGAPORE MILITARY AIRCRAFT CAN TRAIN IN AIR SPACE

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OVER INDONESIAN TERRITORIAL WATERS, BUT GOS HAS NOT AGREED TO INDONESIA PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH JOINT NAVAL PATROLS. GOS HAS REJECTED GOI PROPOSAL THAT DIFFERENCES OVER SUBMITTING TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEME TO IMCO BE SETTLED BY MEETING OF MINISTERS OF LAW FROM THE THREE IMS COUNTRIES. END SUMMARY.

MINISTER SUSENO MADE FOLLOWING COMMENTS TO DCM ON JANUARY 18

RE PRIME MINISTER LEE'S DISCUSSION WITH SUHARTO ON NOVEMBER 29 AND ON SINGAPORE/INDONESIA RELATIONS:

(A) LEE'S INITIATIVE TO BECOME ASEAN SPOKESMAN
DURING SUHARTO'S BRIEF VISIT TO SINGAPORE AT THE END OF NOVEMBER PRIME MINISTER LEE EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION MIGHT ACCORD LOWER PRIORITY TO SOUTHEAST ASIA, INDICATED THAT HE PLANNED TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES IN THE SPRING OF '77 AND SUGGESTED THAT IN ANY MEETINGS HE MIGHT HAVE WITH THE NEW PRESIDENT AND OTHER SENIOR US OFFICIALS THAT HE SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE INTERESTS OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES. SUHARTO RESPONDED CAUTIOUSLY STATING THAT BEFORE ANY FIRM DECISIONS WERE REACHED ON APPROACHING THE NEW AMERICAN GOVERNMENT THAT THE ASEAN GOVERNMENTS SHOULD WATCH AND ANALYZE CAREFULLY THE STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS OF PRESIDENT CARTER, THE NEW SECRETARY OF STATE AND OTHER OFFICIALS.

(B) PROPOSAL FOR AN ASEAN SUMMIT
LEE ALSO PROPOSED THAT AN ASEAN SUMMIT MEETING BE HELD AT THE END OF FEBRUARY 1977 IN KUALA LUMPUR ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST ASEAN SUMMIT MEETING IN BALI, AND THAT MEANWHILE THE VARIOUS ASEAN COMMITTEES SHOULD PRESS AHEAD TO COMPLETE ACTION ON SPECIFIC MATTERS SO THAT THE SUMMIT MEETING WOULD BE ABLE TO ANNOUNCE THAT A NUMBER OF SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS HAD BEEN REACHED SINCE THE LAST MEETING. ACCORDING TO SUSENO, SUHARTO WAS EQUALLY CAUTIOUS IN RESPONDING TO THIS PROPOSAL AND SUGGESTED THAT BEFORE A SUMMIT MEETING BE HELD THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES MEET TO ASSESS THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED TO DATE.

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(C) PREFERENTIAL TRADING AGREEMENT
DURING SUHARTO'S VISIT THE GOS STRONGLY PRESSED THE GOI TO AGREE TO AN ASEAN WIDE PREFERENTIAL TRADING AGREEMENT. SUHARTO AGREED TO THIS AND GAVE INSTRUCTIONS TO HIS MINISTERS TO GO AHEAD WITH SUCH AN AGREEMENT. HOWEVER, IT WAS DECIDED THAT THIS AGREEMENT WOULD BE LIMITED TO PRODUCTS PRODUCED BY THE FIVE INDUSTRIES TO BE ESTABLISHED IN THE ASEAN COUNTRIES.

(D) FURNISHING OF TRADE STATISTICS
SUSENO CONFIRMED THAT THE GOS HAD AGREED TO PROVIDE FIGURES ON INDONESIA/SINGAPORE TRADE. HE SAID THE FIRST REPORT HAD ALREADY BEEN PROVIDED BY THE GOS TO THE INDONESIAN GOVERNMENT AND THAT FUTURE REPORTS WOULD BE FURNISHED ON A YEARLY BASIS. HE SAID THE FIRST REPORT DIFFERED SOMEWHAT FROM THE GOI'S OWN ESTIMATES, BUT THAT THIS WAS DUE IN PART TO THE FACT THAT THE STATISTICS WERE COMPILED SOMEWHAT DIFFERENTLY USING A BRITISH TYPE OF FORMAT. HE SAID HE WOULD SEE IF HE COULD MAKE A COPY AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY (IF EMBASSY SUCCEEDS IN OBTAINING A COPY OF THE TRADING STATISTICS WE WILL FORWARD THEM TO

DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY JAKARTA).

(E) RSAF USE OF INDONESIAN AIR SPACE

THE GOI HAS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE THAT THE RSAF CAN TRAIN IN THE AIR SPACE OVER INDONESIAN TERRITORIAL WATERS. SUSENO COMMENTED SOMEWHAT WRYLY THAT THIS AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE ONLY CONFIRMED EXISTING PRACTICE SINCE INDONESIA'S AIR SPACE WAS FREQUENTLY VIOLATED BY RSAF AIRCRAFT. GOI HAD AGREED THAT THE RSAF ELEMENTS COULD TRAIN AT NATUNA BESAR ISLAND AND THAT THE GOS HAD AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN A JOINT SURVEILLANCE EFFORT IN THE REGION. HOWEVER, THIS STILL DEPENDED ON MALAYSIAN AGREEMENT SINCE RSAF PLANES COULD NOT FLY TO NATUNA BESAR WITHOUT FLYING THROUGH MALAYSIAN AIR SPACE. MALAYSIA IS NOT PARTICULARLY EAGER TO ALLOW RSAF PLANES TO USE ITS AIR SPACE BUT THE GOI WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE PROBLEM WOULD BE WORKED OUT.

(F) JOINT NAVAL PATROLS

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THE GOI HAD ALSO PROPOSED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT NAVAL PATROLS BUT THE GOS APPEARED TO BE LESS INTERESTED IN THIS PROPOSAL AND HAD NOT BEEN WILLING AS YET TO GIVE ITS CONCURRENCE.

(G) NEGOTIATIONS FOR MALACCA STRAIT TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEME SUSENO CONFIRMED RECENT REPORTS THAT THE THREE IMS COUNTRIES HAD AGREED ON A TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEME WHICH INCLUDED AN UNDERKEEL CLEARANCE OF 3.5 METERS. HOWEVER, HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE IS STILL DISAGREEMENT OVER THE QUESTION OF SUBMITTING IT TO IMCO FOR REVIEW AND WHETHER THE LANGUAGE COVERING THIS WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE LANGUAGE CONTAINED IN THE SINGLE NEGOTIATING TEXT (SNT) ON STRAITS DEVELOPED AT THE LOS CONFERENCES. RECENTLY THE GOI HAD PROPOSED THAT THIS MATTER BE DISCUSSED BETWEEN THE JUSTICE MINISTERS OF THE THREE COUNTRIES, SPECIFICALLY THAT INDONESIAN MINISTER OF JUSTICE MOCHTAR MEET WITH MINISTER OF LAW BARKER OF SINGAPORE AND MINISTER OF LAW KADIR FROM MALAYSIA TO RESOLVE THIS MATTER. HOWEVER, THE GOS HAD REJECTED THIS PROPOSAL AND URGED THAT IT BE DISCUSSED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE THREE COUNTRIES.

COMMENT: ABOVE ACCOUNT IS GENERALLY CONSISTENT WITH REPORT OF LEE-SUHARTO MEETING CONTAINED REFTEL ALTHOUGH RAJA FAILED TO MENTION LEE'S EFFORT TO SERVE AS SPOKESMAN FOR THE ASEAN GOVERNMENTS IN HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO THE U.S. SINCE IT NOW APPEARS THAT ASEAN SUMMIT WILL NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL AT LEAST NEXT SUMMER, IT WOULD SEEM THAT LEE HAS DEFERRED TO SUHARTO'S DESIRE TO PROCEED MORE CAUTIOUSLY. HOLDRIDGE

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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